Why Five Ways?

by Mark F. Johnson

Any new treatment of St. Thomas Aquinas's "five ways" for proving the existence of God runs the risk of being a cause of confusion, since the demonstrative power and intent of the Five Ways have long been the subject of significant discussion by scholars of all sorts of intellectual points of view, personal academic interests, and philosophical or theological goals. In order to avoid potential confusion, the one who would undertake a treatment of the Five Ways must strive after clarity of expression, one of the principal tasks of the intellectual life. This in turn entails making sure that the participants in a discussion about the Five Ways all understand in advance what about them is precisely under discussion, the principal terms, the historical and intellectual contexts, and the like. With all of this in mind, I would like to begin by somewhat apologetically explaining what it is I intend to discuss in a paper with so nebulous a title as "Why Five Ways?".

The general discussion concerns, of course, St. Thomas Aquinas's famous *quinque viae*, his five ways for proving the existence of God in question 2, article 3, of the *Prima pars* of his *Summa theologiae*. The principal terms are also well-known, inasmuch as we all know that Thomas is there providing arguments that he thinks compel the human mind to assent to the proposition 'God exists'—that the term 'God' not only has meaning, but reference 'out there' in the real world. The general historical context in Thomas's life is his Italian sojourn, around 1266, where, after an aborted attempt at using Book 1 of Peter Lombard's *Libri sententiarum* as a classroom textbook at the Dominican house of studies at Santa Sabina, he took matters into his own hands, and began the composition of the *Summa theologiae*.[1] The intellectual context is Thomas's strengthening the believer's knowledge of the existence of the subject of sacred doctrine, which is God, the reality to which all other things in that discipline must be referred in order that they fall within the domain of the theologian.[2]

Nothing prevented my calling this talk "Why *the* Five Ways?", but such a title would lead me down roads I do not wish to travel. I am not interested here in addressing Thomas's decision to argue to the exist-

ence of God. After all, someone of a more Anselmian stripe might take a talk so-entitled to be a throwing down of the gauntlet, an invitation to the perennial battle over the self-evidence of God's existence. For my purposes here, I must accept the cogency of Thomas's reasons for an absolute need on the part of the human mind to demonstrate the existence of God, if it is to have knowledge of him in this life, and through its own powers.[3]

Neither am I interested, of course, in the importance of the number 'five.' Christians generally think that God's power is such that he impregnates sacred scripture with such meaning that a St. Augustine is rightly exercised over the precise number of fish caught by Peter and the other apostles towards the end of the Gospel of John—in this case, one hundred and fifty-three of them (John 21:11). Even the Thomist of strictest observance would not accord such power to Thomas. Of course, neither would Thomas himself.

My real interest in this paper does concern the number of Thomas's ways, or, more precisely, that fact that there are a number of ways that he employs in this particular context. My question is this: why more than one way? Why does Thomas, almost at the outset of a work born out of the frustration of having to use the pedagogically flawed writings of others, give his reader a multiplicity of argumentation that yields the very same conclusion? Wouldn't this amount to the needless multiplication of arguments that Thomas pointed to as one of the reasons he undertook the writing of the *Summa theologiae*?[4] Why Five Ways?[5]

One quick and easy way to answer this question would be to say that Thomas employs a number of ways here because he intends that they be cumulatively persuading, and not that each argument attains to God on its own. What we could say, then, is that Thomas's goal in the article 3 is to surround his hearer with many different persuasions, each of which paints, with broad strokes, the derived character of realities that are part of our day-to-day experience, and which, as a group, persuade us to assent to the proposition 'God exists,' even if none of the ways on its own succeeds in this. But this won't do.

To start with, such an approach would have Thomas forgetting the article he had just finished writing, and indeed the tenor of the whole of question 2. The issue for the human mind in question 2 is not persuasion, or urging, it is rather proof, or demonstration. When Thomas asks in article 2, 'Is God's existence demonstrable?', he should be taken to say what he means and mean what he says. The fact that the technical formulae of Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* comprise much of the teaching of article 2 should serve as a material warning that Thomas takes very seriously here the canons of scientific logic, whose goal is to produce certain knowledge, 'quod non contingit aliter se habere.'[6] When we turn to the Five Ways themselves, we see how Thomas has carefully applied the rules of demonstration sketched in article 2: first, an effect from which we arrive at a nominal definition of God, thereafter to the assertion of the existence of a reality described

by the nominal definition, and from that to the assertion of the existence of God.[7] Each of the Five Ways, it bears stressing, ends with the formula 'and this we call God.' All of this would make no sense if Thomas thought of the Five Ways as one, collective persuasion.

Another possible way of addressing all this would be to say that Thomas provides five different arguments in case any particular one of them does not suit the intellectual disposition of any particular person, or, conversely, in case any particular one of them proves compelling for someone, while the others do not. In short, 'different strokes for different folks.' Again, this won't do.

It may well be true that a reader of the Five Ways will be struck by one Way more so than the others and accordingly will devote more interest to the intellectual point of view that is operative in that particular argument. Such an occurrence, however, would be, to my mind, more a manifestation of the intellectual formation of that individual thinker than it would be an expression of the intention of Thomas. The intention of Thomas is best brought out by a reading of the Five Ways in their entirety and in their context. When we do that, we see that Thomas intends for all the arguments to be compelling for all readers. In strict adherence to the procedure outlined in the *Posterior Analytics*, to which Thomas had just made reference, each argument begins from what he regards as an effect better known to us, proceeds through a finite series, and arrives at what he takes to be an absolute first in that causal sequence, which we are then told is God. Each separate way argues in this fashion, and each separate way begins with what Thomas thinks is an effect known to us all.[8] To say that Thomas wrote five distinct ways because he was trying to insure that at least one of them would prove compelling for his reader does not, I think, answer the question.

A still further way of dealing with my question might be to say that, yes, they are five separate ways, but that they are really five manifestations of one and the same proof.[9] While there is something to commend such a view—after all, each proof does seem to follow the very same manner of argumentation—there are other things that give pause. First and foremost, from a methodological point of view, this claim would have us watching Thomas do something that he wrote the very *Summa theologiae* in order to avoid. In the Prologue of the work, Thomas complained that existing presentations of sacred theology all suffered from defects such as frequent, needless repetition that confuses the mind of the hearer.[10] Why would Thomas, having just said this, turn and give five different versions of the one and the same proof? Why not just give one and avoid the risk that needless multiplication might bring? Indeed, if the article merely seeks an affirmative answer to the question 'does God exist?', then wouldn't *any* demonstration do the job? If the *prima via* works, why bother with the *secunda*?

Also, each of the Five Ways seems very clearly to begin with a distinct point of view, or, more precisely, with a different effect under whose

formality Thomas attains to the corresponding first cause. One thinks of Cajetan and his problem here.[11] Cajetan was so taken by the formal diversity of the starting-points of the Five Ways that he felt compelled to say that the Five Ways do not attain to God at all, but only to the existence of five primary attributes, which subsequent teaching in the *Summa theologiae* shows are proper to God.[12]

One need not agree with Cajetan to see the point he is concerned to make. The reality shown to exist at the end of the *prima via* may well be the same reality as that shown to exist at the end of the *secunda*, or *tertia*, and so on. The conclusions of the various ways do not, however, as they stand, warrant such a claim. It would be awkward to say that the way from motion terminates in the first necessary being, or that the argument from the gradations of perfection arrives at the prime mover. Thomas does not tell us that the Five Ways are different manifestations of one, single proof, and since the different effects from which Thomas starts are not convertible with one another, we convert them with one another, or with a sort of 'meta-proof,' at the peril of misreading him.

My own thinking is that we should say that Thomas's Five Ways are, to his mind, five formally distinct proofs, each of which attains, by itself, to a first reality that is responsible for the formality of the effect from which the proof proceeds. He gives five separate arguments that show, to his satisfaction, that the proposition 'there is a God' is true. Given the fact that Thomas intended the *Summa theologiae* to be a work free from the pedagogical failure that plagued contemporaneous *Summae*, we can only assume that the Five Ways are an integral part of his teaching plan in the *Summa*. My goal here, then, is to find out why Thomas chose to use more than one way, and more than that, why he chose to use these particular ways. Why Five Ways?

The Nature and Scope of Sacred Theology

The best way to start such an investigation is to examine what Thomas is after in the *Summa theologiae* as a whole. As a summary of sacred theology, the *Summa theologiae* aims to be a systematic presentation of the *sermo de Deo*, the discourse about God, and we all know that Thomas is preeminent among his peers in maintaining the scientific character of sacred doctrine. The student of the work has as his aim knowing God as best as is possible in this life, an undertaking infinitely aided by the revelation of God. The subject matter of the discipline of sacred theology is God, and all things in relation to him.[13] Put in the technically more complex language of his Parisian *Scriptum* on the *Sentences*, the subject genus of sacred theology is divine being, *ens divinum*, much in the same way that mobile being, or *ens mobile*, is the *genus subiectum* of natural philosophy. All things considered in sacred theology must fall under this formality, whether proximately or remotely, in order that they belong to this science. Among the things falling under *ens divinum*, however, one of them, namely God, is the

subiectum attributionis, the one to whom all other things studied in sacred theology are referred. In natural philosophy, for instance, many diverse things fall under the heading of *ens mobile*, things such as time, place, change, the infinite, the continuum, and the like. They do so because they have some relationship—again, proximate or remote—to a principal reality, which most manifests the character of *ens mobile*. This is, of course, the mobile body, the *corpus mobile*. Finally, there is what is called the *genus scibile*, or the knowable genus, which is the subject of the science considered as to the aspect under which it is attained by the knowing power. In natural philosophy it is the first grade of abstraction, whereby the mind considers that which is in common sensible matter. In sacred theology, it is the *credible*, or that which is had *per inspirationem fidei*, through the inspiration of faith. All things considered in sacred theology must be referred to God, in relationship to whom they have their peculiar intelligibility in that science.[14]

There is more to it than this. The wisdom of metaphysics considers God, but it does so because it attains to him as the principle of its *genus subiectum*, which is *ens commune*, which in turn is the proper effect of God's causality. Sacred theology considers God, too, but it considers God not as the principle of substance, the subject of attribution of metaphysics, but as the very subject of attribution of sacred theology. It is God who is studied directly.

Again, there is more to it than this, for saying that God is the subject of direct study in sacred theology does not do justice to the manner in which he is known or considered. In sacred theology, we do not study God simply as he is knowable from created effects but also through effects in the order of grace and as he reveals himself to us.[15] Because of God's being the source of our knowledge in sacred doctrine, our knowledge is accordingly likened to the knowledge that he has of things. For Thomas, sacred doctrine in us is a certain stamp, a certain impression, of God's knowledge: "sacra doctrina [est] velut quaedam impressio divinae scientiae, quae est una et simplex omnium."[16] What we possess in sacred theology, then, is the very knowledge of things that God himself has, a knowledge that we possess by means of a unique type of subalternation. What we know in sacred theology is the very same thing known by God and by the blessed in heaven—we through the darkness of faith, and in a multiple way, they through the clarity of direct vision, and simply.[17]

Thomas is not, to the best of my knowledge, a big fan of paradox, but if there is anything in his thought that approaches the paradoxical, it is this. Thomas claims that man, through faith, has, as it were, a God's-eye view of things, and that through faith man looks over God's shoulder upon all things. While this is a splendid teaching, Thomas is ready with the melancholy reminder that this knowledge is received in a knower whose proper mode of knowing is ordered to sensible, material things and whose mode of coming to know is to proceed progressively,

from the more known to the less known, even if the less known is more knowable strictly speaking. "Hence," he says, "although through revelation we are lifted up to know something that would otherwise be unknown to us, we are not lifted up to such an extent that we can know it in any other way than through sensible things."[18] Sacred theology may be a divine knowledge as to origin, but it is human as to mode.

An aside on the order of the *Summa theologiae*. I have long been interested in the problem of the order of the *Summa theologiae*, and it seems to me that the question of its order might have been resolved long ago if we took Thomas seriously as regards what sacred doctrine is—God's knowledge in a frail mind. The order of the *Summa* would follow naturally then, since its contents would be the knowledge that God has of things, presented in a manner befitting man's mode of knowing.

Continuing, Thomas takes the loftiness of sacred theology's point of view so seriously that he feels that the only sufficient way to characterize it as an intellectual discipline is to liken it not merely to a science, but to wisdom in the manner of Aristotle's intellectual virtue of wisdom, which he sketches in Book 6 of the *Ethics*, and which is operative in every page of the *Metaphysics*.[19] As wisdom, sacred theology must concern itself with principles and conclusions, since it possesses the perfections of both science and of understanding, but its proper activity is manifested in its concern with the order and intelligibility of its first principles which in sacred doctrine are the articles of faith. Although we receive the articles of faith in a multiple way, that does not prevent their being ordered such that the intelligibility of one is seen to derive from another, and Thomas is at every turn doing just that.[20] The task of the theologian as *sapiens* is to order the truths of faith such that his multiple knowledge of divine things approximates the simplicity of God's knowledge. Prior to any ordering of principles is an understanding of their content and, if need be, a systematic presentation of the notions that comprise the first principles. The latter task often involves providing for deficiency on the part of the knower, and a good part of what Thomas does in the *Summa* is bringing the student to an understanding of something that might actually pertain to one of the human sciences, but which is presupposed to the study of sacred doctrine.[21] I shall deal with this in more detail, of course, as regards the Five Ways, but for now suffice it to say that the theologian, as Thomas envisages him, must possess the perfections of all the lower sciences—logic, natural philosophy, psychology, moral science and metaphysics—in order to perform his tasks, in order to be an integral theologian.[22]

I want to say that Thomas's providing us with five different ways to prove the existence of God is an outgrowth of his conviction that sacred doctrine is a wisdom, and that he does this in order to lead the frail human mind to as sufficient a knowledge of the principle subject of this science as possible. In order to show that this is so, I want to turn to the Five Ways and examine the particular formality of each, its 'thrust,'

so to speak. In doing this I am going to make shameless use of some of the ideas of Father Lawrence Dewan, ideas that he presented in a 1974 article on the number and order of Thomas's Five Ways.[23]

The Number and Order of the Five Ways

While each of the Five Ways begins from an effect, each of the effects is unique. The First Way begins from the motion observable in things; the Second from the exercise of efficient causality; the Third from the possible and the necessary; the Fourth from the various gradations found in things; and the Fifth from the governance of things. Does Thomas just splatter the Five Ways upon the page with no principle of order,[24] or does he employ any discernible progression among the Five Ways? Piety bids the latter. Now one might suggest that Thomas does have an order in mind, such as the three ways of negation, causality and eminence, which we receive from Pseudo-Dionysius, or the four causes, but, to make a long story short, the best principle of order arises from his reading of Aristotle's doctrine of being.

In Book 9 of the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle is presenting 'being' as it is divided by actuality and potentiality.[25] Now actuality cannot be defined, since it is primary, but after providing ways in which the intelligibility of actuality can be made manifest, Aristotle claims that actuality allows for a diversity of types, which are ultimately presented as 'actuality,' 'operation,' and 'being imperfectly.' The first of these is like the very power of sight with regard to the organ, while the second is like the act of seeing with regard to the power of seeing. The third, finally, is like being moved. The first, accordingly, is like the root reality that is substance; the second is the activity that issues from some thing, its operation; and the third is that imperfect actuality that is motion.

Somewhat later on in the same book, Aristotle compares actuality to potentiality, and in the course of that discussion, claims that actuality is prior to potentiality in motion, time, and perfection. He also compares the two as to well and ill and shows that actuality is better than potentiality. Finally, he compares the two as to knowledge of truth and falsity, and he shows that actuality is the principle of understanding and that potentiality is only understood by starting with actuality. Also, and this seems important given the wording of the Fourth Way, the true and the noble is said to be found more in being actually than in being potentially.

Making the link between Aristotle's statements and the first four of Thomas's Five Ways is not difficult. Situating ourselves in the general context of actuality, we start with imperfect actuality, being moved, which is the starting point of the First Way. We then start with operation as manifested by the exercise of efficient causality, and this is the starting point of the Second Way. Turning to the Third Way, we start with substance as the primary manifestation of actuality itself. The Fourth Way, finally, proceeds from being as good, true and noble,

which flow from the actual as such, which are accordingly proper passions, or proper accidents, of being as actual.

Now Thomas has changed Aristotle's order. Aristotle had presented primary actuality, then operation, then imperfect actuality, and Thomas has switched the first and the last. The reason for this lies in Thomas's conviction, a conviction he also gets from Aristotle, that we should start with what is better known to us, and being in motion is more known to us than being the source of action, which is the formality of the Second Way, or being the primary actuality of a substance, which pertains to the Third Way. After all, Thomas starts with the way from motion precisely because he thinks it more manifest (*manifestior*). The actuality that is the exercise of causality is better known to us than is the actuality that is the primary act of a substance, which is why, in the scheme of the *Posterior Analytics*, we use the activity of a thing as a way to come to understand its essence, which is least apparent to us. If all of this is true, then we would seem to have warrant for saying that the first Four Ways arise from the presentation of being as actuality in Book 9 of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*.

So far, so good, but what about the Fifth Way? If the first Four Ways constitute a unit of sorts, and if the Fifth Way is not intelligible in terms of actuality, either as imperfect, operational or substantial, or as the property of actuality as such, then where does it come from, and why is it placed where it is? The focus of the Fifth Way is not the being moved of things, or their operation, or the durability of their existence, or even the gradation that follows upon their substantial existence. It is rather the directedness of natural things towards goals that they do not establish, a directedness that calls for an intelligent governor that is the source of their directedness. In short, the first four Ways attain to God as the source of their existence, and the Fifth Way attains to him as the source of their directedness to an end.

Such thinking finds support in a number of texts in the *Summa*, where Thomas claims that God is considered in sacred doctrine both as the origin of things, as he is presented, say, in question 44 of the *Prima pars*, and as their goal, as one sees in question 103 of the *Prima pars*, and in the entire *Secunda* and *Tertia pars*. If such is the case, then we can say with some assurance that Thomas provides five separate arguments for the existence of God, the first four of which attain to him under the formality of a source of existence, the last of which attains to him under the formality of a source of directed motion.

The foregoing, if acceptable, establishes that there is an order among the Five Ways and what that order roughly is. It does not explain, however, why Thomas undertook a multiple presentation of the existence of God. The major question of this paper accordingly remains unanswered, though an answer is at hand.

Thomas's immediate task in question 2, article 3 of the *Prima pars* is to establish the existence of God, the subject of the study of sacred doctrine, under whose notion all other things are considered. Now any

single demonstration would accomplish this, and since Thomas is not interested in intellectual excess, his multiple presentation here indicates that his thinking extends beyond the limit of question 2, article 3. What he is doing is taking the occasion of a methodological necessity for sacred theology, demonstrating the existence of its subject, which is not *per se* known to us, to lay the demonstrative groundwork for the entire work. Sacred doctrine, we remember, is God's knowledge in a frail mind, and the theologian exercising his sapiential functions is constantly aware of the needs of the human mind as it studies God and of the demonstrative techniques available to him for doing so. Of course, the theologian's concern with God does not cease with the establishment of his existence. Having shown that God is, the theologian's work is just beginning, because he must immediately undertake to enumerate the divine attributes, as well as elucidate the Trinity of Persons, and all the things that are necessary for doing that in a way befitting the human knower. Moreover, these tasks are quickly followed by the theologian's duty to present God's creatures in a way that mirrors how he knows and governs them, not to mention a treatment of the activity of the image of God, man, and of Christ, who is man's way of tending to God. To do all of this in a way that is productive of the ordered knowledge he seeks, he will have to employ the information gathered in establishing God's existence.

Each of the Five Ways starts with a particular effect, under whose formality it attains to a corresponding first cause, which is then and only then called 'God.' Having done all that, we are not just left with five, repeated claims of 'God exists.' Rather, we possess five different enunciations which, while all including God's existence in them, are such as to be later used as formally distinct premises in arguments that attain to the various divine attributes in accordance with their own demonstrative capacity. Thus Thomas, having shown that God exists, and having claimed that our best knowledge of his attributes is to be had by removing from him things that cannot apply to him, first turns to remove from God any notion of corporeality, a removal upon which a host of later arguments depends, such as that of God's universal knowledge in question 14, and through that, of God's having will in question 19, and through both of those, of the description of the Trinity of Persons in questions 33 through 38. When we examine the argument of question 3, article 1, where Thomas asks whether God is a body, we find him using the conclusions of the First, Third and Fourth Ways in order to show that God is not a body. He uses the conclusion of the Second Way in question 3, article 2, to show that God is not even a composite of matter and form, upon which our knowledge of the identification of God with his essence depends, and through that, of God's simplicity, perfection, goodness, infinity, immutability, and so on.

In short, the Five Ways pertain to the orders of final and material causality for Thomas. They pertain to final causality because they are written to help the student of sacred doctrine in his establishment of a

theological knowledge in himself that can be, at its height, a human approximation of the knowledge that God has of things, thus becoming a truer foretaste of the beatific vision that is the final cause of all sacred theology.[26] Because of their pertaining to the order of final causality, they pertain as well to the order of material causality, since the conclusions that nominally defined God in the Five Ways serve as premises in subsequent argumentation regarding the divine essence, which in turns yields knowledge that will become part of the argumentative bedrock for the rest of the work. Premises in an argument have the role of proximate matter.

My point, then, is that Thomas is keenly aware that, while God's existence is self-evident to him, as are the divine attributes and all the rest, if a man is to have disciplined, ordered knowledge of God through his own powers, and even then on the supposition of God's revelation, he needs all the help he can get. Thomas, performing the functions of the integral theologian, gives that man as much help as he is able to provide, by collecting together and ordering five different ways that will allow his student to produce in himself a God-like knowledge of things, on the basis of the demonstrative potential of the conclusions of the Five Ways, and through the judicious ordering that is the prerogative of theological wisdom.

Thomas's writing of the Five Ways is not an admission that some of them might fail, nor is it an over-loading of the human mind with so much persuading argumentation that somehow, some way, the mind will assent to the proposition 'God exists.' It is rather a sensible, human, even humble admission that God's bounteous self-giving in sacred doctrine puts immense strain upon a mind least proportioned to the kind of knowledge that God has of things. Why Five Ways? Because without them, the student of sacred doctrine would be lost, and Thomas wrote the *Summa theologiae* in order that that might not happen.

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Notes

1. For more on the historical context surrounding the composition of the *Summa theologiae*, see L. E. Boyle, *The Setting of the Summa theologiae of Saint Thomas* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1982). A student report, or *reportatio*, of these Roman lectures survives, and is now called somewhat misleadingly "the Roman commentary"—'misleadingly' because we are not at all sure whether Thomas ever intended his classroom lectures to form a written work, or that he ever reviewed and corrected the student's report, thus making it an *ordinatio*. For an account of this *reportatio* or "Roman Commentary" on Book 1 of the *Sentences*, along with a list of the new texts to be found

in it, see my "*Alia lectura fratris thome*: A List of the New Texts of St. Thomas Aquinas found in Lincoln College, Oxford, MS. Lat. 95," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* (1990): 34-61. (For the sake of convenience all references will be given first in full and thereafter in abbreviated form, such that reference to the article just cited would be: Johnson, "*Alia Lectura*," followed by the appropriate page and article number. References to the writings of Thomas will be given first in full and thereafter in standard form). Thomas does not provide a series of arguments in the "Roman Commentary" for the existence of God, but he does give three articles that correspond to *Summa theologiae* q. 2, a. 1, q. 2, a. 2, and q. 32, a. 1, respectively. See Johnson, "*Alia lectura*," 46, nos. 22-24. Thomas also provides a lengthy treatment *de deo uno*, corresponding particularly to distinction 8 of Book 1 of the *Sentences* (see ibid., 50-51, nos. 39-47).

2. Thomas's presentation in the *Summa theologiae* of God as the subject of sacred theology differs significantly from the one found in his early, Parisian commentary on the *Sentences*, though it differs very little from the treatment found in the Roman commentary (Johnson, "*Alia lectura*," 43, no. 8). The difference in presentation between the two is so significant, in fact, that Pierre Mandonnet felt compelled to footnote the difference in his edition of the Parisian *Scriptum super sententias*, which he then proceeded to harmonize. See *In I Sent.*, prol., a. 4, *in corp.*, and ad 1, in *Sancti Thomae Aquinatis Scriptum super libros sententiarum*, vol. 1, ed. P. Mandonnet (Paris: Lethielleux, 1929), 15-16, and Mandonnet's note on p. 16. Thomas's presentation of God as the subject of sacred doctrine in the Parisian commentary is actually a very clever, Aristotelian attempt at incorporating the teaching on this matter of Hugh of St. Victor, Alexander of Hales, Albert the Great and Bonaventure, into an approach that to Thomas's mind better preserves sacred theology's character as a discipline distinct from other disciplines.

3. It is interesting to note that while in the famous text on the self-evidence of God's existence in the *Prima pars* of the *Summa theologiae*, q. 2, a. 1, ad 2, where Thomas addresses the argument of Anselm without mentioning his name, the parallel passage in the newly-found Roman commentary mentions Anselm's name explicitly, twice directly and once by pronominal reference. See Johnson, "*Alia lectura*," 46, no. 22. The preliminary difficulty and Thomas's reply, as found in the manuscript (Oxford, Lincoln College MS Lat. 95), run thus: "(fol. 12va) Preterea. Quod non potest cogitari non esse est per se notum. Set nullus potest cogitare deum non esse, ut Anselmus dicit. Ergo deum esse est per se notum. Probatio medie. Deus est illud quo maius cogitari non potest. Aut ergo deum esse est [est] tantum in corde tuo aut in corde et in re. Si in corde tantum tunc non est maius quo cogitari non potest, quia maius est quod est in re et in corde. Similiter nec in re tantum, quia maius est quod est in re simul et in corde. Ergo deum esse est in corde et in re. Et sic nullo modo potest cogitari deum non esse. Ergo id quod prius . . . (fol. 12va *in calce*) Ad secundum dicendum quod quicquid dicit Anselmus, potest tamen cogitari deum non esse, sicut habetur in psalmo, *dixit insipiens in corde suo*; et multi sunt qui nihil sciunt de deo. Et ratio sua ad hoc non valet, quia licet non possit cogitari deum non esse, quia nihil potest cogitari maius deo, propter hoc non sequitur nisi quod deus sit in mente ut cogitatum. Vel dicendum quod quantum in se est, est ita per se notum

quod non potest cogitari non esse."

4. See *Summa theologiae*, I, prol., in *Sancti Thomae de Aquina Summa Theologiae* (Rome: Editiones Paulinae, 1962), 3: "Consideravimus namque huius doctrinae novitios, in his quae a diversis conscripta sunt, plurimum impediri: partim quidem propter multiplicationem inutilium quaestionum, articulorum et argumentorum. . . ." It would be difficult to suggest, given this quotation, that in providing a multiplicity of argumentation in question 2, article 3 of the first part of the *Summa theologiae*, Thomas is returning to the manner of argumentation that characterizes the *Summa contra gentiles*, since that work seems quite definitely to have a different goal in Thomas's mind. See Mark D. Jordan, "The Protreptic Structure of the *Summa contra gentiles*," *The Thomist* 50 (1986): 173-209.

5. The question that concerns me here is somewhat different from the one that has prompted the many discussions on the order of the Five Ways and the types of argument found in each. Of these latter the most persuasive to my mind is that of L. Dewan, "The Number and Order of St. Thomas's Five Ways," *Downside Review* 92 (1974): 1-18. Others are: L. Elders, "Les cinq voies et leur place dans la philosophie de saint Thomas," in *Quinque Sunt Viae: Acte du Symposium sur les cinq voies de la Somme Théologique*, ed. L. Elders (Città del Vaticana: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1980): 133-46; Id., *The Philosophical Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Leiden: Brill, 1990); S. Guiliani, "Perchè cinque le 'vie' di S. Tommaso?" *Sapienza* 1 (1948): 153-66; F. Muñiz, "La 'quarta vía' de Santo Tomàs para demostrar la existencia de Dios," *Revista de Filosofia* 3 (1944): 385-433, 4 (1945): 49-99; A. Kenny, *The Five Ways* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969); F. Van Steenberghen, *Dieu caché: Comment savons-nous que dieu existe?* (Louvain: Publications Universitaires de Louvain, 1966); T. C. O'Brien, *Metaphysics and the Existence of God: A Reflexion on the Question of God's Existence in Contemporary Thomistic Metaphysics* (Washington, D.C.: The Thomist Press, 1960). Despite the similarity in title, H. Johnson's "Why Five Ways? A Thesis and Some Alternatives," in *Arts libéraux et philosophie au moyen-âge* (Montréal: Institut d'Études Médiévales, 1969), 1143-154, is as well an investigation into the various causes through which Thomas proceeds in the Five Ways.

6. See Aristotle, *Liber posteriorium analyticorum*, lib. 1, cap. 2, 71b9-12, in *Sancti Thomae de Aquino Opera Omnia*, vol. 1/2, 2nd ed., ed. Leonine (Romae: Ad Sanctae Sabinae, 1989), 17, "Scire autem opinamur unumquodque simpliciter, set non sophistico modo, quod est secundum accidens. Cum causam quoque arbitramur cognoscere propter quam res est, et quoniam illius causa est, et non est contingere hoc aliter se habere."

7. See *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 2, a. 2, *in corp.*, and especially ad 2: "Ad secundum dicendum quod cum demonstratur causa per effectum, necesse est uti effectu loco definitionis causae, ad probandum causam esse: et hoc maxime contingit in Deo. Quia ad probandum aliquid esse, necesse est accipere pro medio quid significet nomen, non autem quod quid est: quia quaestio quid est sequitur ad quaestionem an est. Nomina autem Dei imponuntur ab effectibus, ut postea ostendetur: unde, demonstrando Deum esse per effectum, accipere possumus pro medio quid significet hoc nomen Deus."

8. See *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 3, a. 3, *in corp.*, where each of the Ways begins by including the reader in the investigation, such that Thomas's description of the effect known to us in the First and most manifest way is "certum est . . . et sensu constat, aliqua moveri in hoc mundo," while the Second and Third claim that "invenimus in istis sensibilibus" or "invenimus in rebus," which leads to what "omnes Deum nominant," or "omnes dicunt Deum." The Fourth Way, while it does not claim that 'we' find diverse gradations in things, nonetheless holds that "invenitur in rebus aliquid magis et minus bonum," which leads to something that 'we' call God: ". . . et hoc dicimus Deum." But in the Fifth Way "videmus quod aliqua quae cognitione carent," and this, too, leads to the reality of which we say, "et hoc dicimus Deum."

9. For an author who holds this view, see Guérard des Lauriers, *La preuve de Dieu et les cinq voies* (Rome: Università Lateranense, 1966). See also Joseph Owens, "Aquinas and the Five Ways," in *St. Thomas Aquinas and the Existence of God: The Collected Papers of Joseph Owens*, ed. J. Catan (New York: SUNY Press, 1980), 141, who seems to say much the same thing, though for different reasons (see ibid., 262, n. 39). R. Garrigou-Lagrange might also be included. See his *De deo uno: Commentarium in primam partem s. Thomae*, (Paris: Desclée, 1938), 112-13.

10. See the text cited above, n. 4.

11. See Cajetan, *In Iam partem summae theologiae*, q. 2, a. 3, in *Sancti Thomae Aquinatis Opera Omnia*, ed. Leonine (Rome: Propaganda Fidei, 1988), vol. 4, 32-34.

12. See Cajetan, a. 3, no. 3: "Alio modo afferri possunt [quinque viae] ad concludendum quaedam praedicata inveniri in rerum natura, quae secundum veritatem sunt propria Dei: non curando quomodo vel qualiter sint, etc. Et ad hoc intentum hic afferuntur . . . . Omnia enim haec praedicata, scilicet movens immobile, primum efficiens, necessarium non ex alio, maxime ens, et primum gubernans intelligendo, sunt secundum veritatem propria Deo; et ideo, concludendo haec inveniri in rerum natura, concluditur directe, quasi per accidens, quod Deus est, idest, Deus, non ut Deus, sed ut habens talem conditionem, est; et consequenter ipsum substratum, scilicet Deus ut Deus, est." Note that I use the English word 'indirectly' to translate Cajetan's 'per accidens,' despite the fact that he says that we 'directly' conclude to God's existence—to have translated 'per accidens' by the English word 'accidently' might have suggested that for Cajetan we 'stumble upon' God's existence. His interpretation is reviewed and defended by Stephano Bersani, C.M., "De mente Cardinalis Caietani circa vim conclusionum quinque viarum," *Divus Thomas [Piacenza]* 36 (1933): 429-34.

13. See *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 1, a. 7, *in corp.*: "Omnia autem pertractantur, in sacra doctrina sub ratione Dei vel quia sunt ipse Deus; vel quia habent ordinem ad Deum, ut ad principium et finem. Unde sequitur quod Deus vere sit subiectum huius scientiae." See also *In I Sent.*, prol., a. 4, *in corp.*, and ad 1; *In Boethii de trinitate*, q. 2, a. 2; ibid., q. 5, a. 4; *In I Sent., [Rome]*, prol., fol. 4va.

14. Such emphasis on Thomas's part explains why the *secunda pars* of the *Summa theologiae* is, properly speaking, not about man, but about the image of God in action. See *Summa theologiae*, I-II, prol.: "Quia, sicut Damascenus dicit, homo factus ad imaginem Dei dicitur, secundum quod per imaginem significatur

intellectuale et arbitrio liberum et per se potestativum; postquam praedictum est de exemplari, scilicet de Deo, et de his quae processerunt ex divina potestate secundum eius voluntatem; restat ut consideremus de eius imagine, idest de homine, secundum quod et ipse est suorum operum principium, quasi liberum arbitrium habens et suorum operum potestatem."

15. See *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 1, a. 7, ad 2; q. 12, a. 13, ad.1.

16. *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 1, a. 3, ad 2. See also *Summa contra gentiles* 1.2, cap 2, §Quarto, in *S. Thomae Aquinatis Liber de Veritate Catholicae Fidei contra Errores Infidelium*, eds. C. Pera and P. Marc (Turin: Marietti, 1961), vol. 1, 116, no. 862: "Quarto, haec consideratio [divinorum factorum] homines in quadam similitudine divinae perfectionis constituit. Ostensum est enim in primo libro quod Deus, cognoscendo seipsum, in se omnia alia intuetur. Cum igitur christiana fides hominem de Deo principaliter instruit, et per lumen divinae revelationis creaturarum cognitorem facit, fit in homine quaedam divinae sapientiae simulitudo;" ibid., cap 4, no. 876: "Exinde etiam est quod non eodem ordine utraque doctrina procedit. Nam in doctrina philosophiae, quae creaturas secundum se considerat et ex eis, in Dei cognitionem perducit, prima est consideratio de creaturis et ultima de Deo. In doctrina vero fidei, quae creaturas non nisi in ordine ad Deum considerat, primo est consideratio Dei et postmodum creaturarum. Et sic est perfectior: utpote Dei cognitioni similior, qui seipsum cognoscens alia intuetur." See also *In Boethii de trinitate*, q. 2, a. 2, *in corp.*; q. 3, a. 1, ad 4; *Summa theologiae*, I-II, q. 74, a. 10, ad 3.

17. The subalternation of sacred theology constitutes the one instance where a subalternation by reason of the principles of knowledge *(ratione principiorum)* is not the result of a prior subalternation by reason of subject matter (*ratione subiecti*), as happens in mixed sciences, like optics and mathematical physics. See *Summa theologiae* I, q. 1, a. 2; II-II, q. 1, a. 5; *De veritate*, q. 14, a. 9; *In Boethii de trinitate*, q. 2, a. 2, ad 5 and ad 7; and especially *In I sent.*, prol., a. 3, qua. 2, *in corp.* This latter text, though found in the early Parisian commentary on the *Sentences*, is a later, authentic insertion from Thomas himself which may actually post-date the treatment of theology found in the *Prima pars*. See E. Booth, "The Three Pecia Systems of St. Thomas Aquinas's Commentary *In I Sententiarum*," in *La production de livre universitaire au moyen âge: Exempla et pecia* (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1988), 225-52.

18. *In librum Boethii de trinitate*, q. 6, a. 3., *in corp.*, in *Sancti Thomae de Aquino expositio super librum Boethii de trinitate*, 2nd ed., ed. B. Decker (Leiden: Brill, 1965), 221: "Unde quamvis per revelationem elevemur ad aliquid cognoscendum, quod alias esset nobis ignotum, non tamen ad hoc quod alio modo cognoscamus nisi per sensibilia." It is because of this material nature of human knowing that Thomas thinks the use of metaphor befits sacred scripture. See *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 1, a. 9, *in corp.*; *In I sent.*, prol. a. 5; *In Boethii de trinitate*, q. 2, a. 4.

19. I take the liberty here of referring to my *The Sapiential Character of Sacra Doctrina in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas: The Appropriation of Aristotle's Intellectual Virtue of Wisdom*, unpublished doctoral dissertation (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1990). For a shorter presentation see my "The

Sapiential Character of the First Article of the *Summa theologiae*," in *Philosophy and the God of Abraham: Essays in Memory of James A. Weisheipl, O.P.* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1991), 85-98.

20. See, for instance, *Summa theologiae*, II-II, q. 1, a. 7, where in dealing with whether the articles of faith increased in number over time, Thomas explains how all the articles of faith can be reduced to 'deum esse,' and 'deum esse providentem.'

21. This is the doctrine of the preambles of faith. See *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 2, a. 2, ad 1; II-II, q. 1, a. 5, ad 3. Thomas's comments just before treating the powers of the soul in general is very instructive here. See ibid., I, q. 78, *in capite*: "Deinde considerandum est de potentiis animae in speciali. Ad considerationem autem Theologi pertinet inquirere specialiter solum de potentiis intellectivis et appetitivis, in quibus virtutes inveniuntur. Sed quia cognitio harum potentiarum quodammodo dependet ex allis, ideo nostra consideratio de potentiis animae in speciali erit tripartita: primo namque considerandum est de his quae sunt praeambula ad intellectum; secundo de potentiis intellectivis; tertio de potentiis appetitivis." The subsequent discussion concerns the kinds of powers of the soul, the species of the vegetative part, and the exterior and interior senses.

22. See *In Boethii de trinitate*, q. 3, a. 1, *in corp.*: "Requiritur enim ad hoc fere omnium scientiarum cognitio, cum omnium finis sit cognitio divinorum." See ibid., q. 2, a. 3, ad 7.

23. See the article referred to above, note 5. See also his "The Distinctiveness of St. Thomas' 'Third Way'," *Dialogue* 19 (1980): 201-18. Fr. Dewan is of course not responsible for the use I make of his work.

24. Canon Van Steenberghen suggests this, on pages 173-75 of the work cited above, note 5.

25. See *In IX Metaphysicorum*, lect. 1, ed. R. Spiazzi (Turin: Marietti, 1964), 425, no. 1773, regarding *Metaphysics* 9.1 1046a3. For the sake of brevity I refer the reader simply to Thomas's exposition of book 9, particularly lectures 5-11, and to Dewan's article, "The Number and Order," 11-17.

26. On this see my "The Sapiential Character," cited above in note 19. See also J. M. Ramírez, *De hominis beatitudine*, proleg. 2, cap. 2, art. 2, in *Jacobus M. Ramírez, O.P.: Opera Omnia*, ed. Victorino Rodríguez, tomus 3, vol. 1 (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1972), 128, who describes the beatific vision's relationship to theology thus: "Est enim beatitudo supernaturalis propria ratio essendi totius Theologiae sacrae, apex et consummatio totius scientiae theologicae ac primum principium totius ordinis moralis supernaturalis."